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Wildrenbruch Tale of two roses

THE
TALE OF TWO ROSES

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

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AUG 7 - 1894

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BY

KATHARINE W. EVANS

NEW YORK
JAMES POTT & CO.

114 FIFTH AVENUE.

1895

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THE TALE

OF

TWO ROSES.

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WITHOUT the gates of a large city where lived many people, rich and poor, there resided a gardener who owned a large, magnificent rose-garden. There grew roses of all colors and kinds; for the gardener understood his business, and he tended and cherished the roses with much skill and care; not from love of the flowers themselves, but for the profit, as he sold them to the people in the town.

And his industry bore rich fruit; for many came to purchase the roses to plant in their gardens, and decorate their rooms, but only the rich, for the gardener charged much for the flowers, and the poor could not afford them.

One day when the Sun had brought his beloved child, the Summer, that she might walk on earth and fill everything with joy, there had bloomed in the midst of the garden two roses, more beautiful than all else therein.

They grew upon separate bushes, but

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stood so near to each other that they almost touched when their heads drooped even a little.

Hence it came that the two roses became great friends, said "thou" to each other and, although they did not resemble each other, for one had tender, yellowish petals, with a reddish calyx, and the other was as white as snow from the outside to the heart, yet they considered themselves sisters, and confided all their secrets to one another. And as they did so there went from their lips so sweet a perfume that the entire garden swam in a sea of fragrance; and their caresses were so lovely to behold, the little beetles who busily ran from side to side stopped, and nudging each other said, "Look, the roses are whispering secrets again! What may they be about?"

But the roses were talking about their future; for, since they were quite young as yet, they had no past and could not converse about that; they much preferred talking about the future, for that consisted of nothing but delicious dreams.

That they were the most beautiful in the whole garden they already knew. They found it out from the admiring glances which the gardener cast upon them, from the words of the passing visitors, and felt it every morning when the morning wind rushed into the garden, swept away the night and touched the hearts of the roses all around so that they bowed in admiration. That

always seemed like a homage from the entire garden.

Thus it may be understood that the two roses, although at the bottom of their hearts they were good and kind as roses always are, became a little proud, and made great pretensions as to their future.

It was to be only a King, a Prince, or at least some one immensely rich, who would some day buy them and take them home. They agreed upon that, and their only care was that then they would be separated, and carried one here and the other there. That was a great grief, for they loved each other very much; and when the thought occurred to them they wept each a large tear which lay, when the daylight came, like a shining drop in their calyx, and was most beautiful to behold.

Yes, that was so lovely that the Morning Wind, who had travelled far around the country, and was therefore a connoisseur of flower-beauty, stopped before them full of astonishment, and bowing said, "To true beauty everything is becoming, even grief."

And the sister roses smiled kindly on him and replied, "Oh, what a charming young man you are, dear Mr. Morning Wind, since you can compliment so pleasantly thus early." Thereupon the Morning Wind took up his coat-tails and flew away much flattered.

Thus the days passed, and very many visitors and buyers came to the garden;

but for the roses no purchaser had been found. It seemed as though every one knew they were destined for something extraordinary. But it came to pass one beautiful summer afternoon, toward evening, that a splendid open carriage rolled along and stopped before the garden door. The two roses could look down the broad walk through the railing; and, as they saw the carriage in front of it, their hearts thrilled as if with a presentiment that that meant something for them; and they put their cheeks together and whispered to each other their thoughts.

On the box of the carriage sat the coachman, and by his side the footman, both with hats and coats trimmed with broad gold braid; and the roses, as yet inexperienced in worldly matters, thought that these must be the persons of importance. But a little Corn-beetle, who had lived a long time in palatial mansions, and once had even sat upon the hand of a real princess, came flying through the air at that moment, and, hearing their conversation, said, "Not so, those are only servants upon the box: the persons of importance are seated in the carriage: watch them."

Then the roses opened wide their eyes, but were not much pleased with those they saw; for one was a lady who was no longer young and pretty, and the other a gentleman who indeed had a fine black beard, but no space on his face to display it to advantage.

As they exchanged their remarks the little Corn-beetle said, "You two do not understand anything at all about the world. Don't you know that is the richest banker in the entire town, and that the lady is his wife: why should rich people wish to be pretty? That they leave to the poor who have nothing else." The roses were much ashamed at their ignorance, and blushed a little in their embarrassment; and that was very becoming to them.

Meanwhile, the gentleman and the lady had left the carriage, and there climbed down a little dog which had silver-white hair, and was so round that it could only waddle quite slowly and from time to time bark a little, as if it cried, "Go away! away! away!"

The gardener stood at the gate, hat in hand, and made a low deep bow. The gentleman nodded to him slightly, but the lady passed him by and looked into the air. As the little Corn-beetle perceived this, it called to the roses, "There you can learn something. See how rich people must act; that lady understands how to be rich." The roses were again ashamed of their bad taste, for in truth they had not liked it at all. The visitors came up the broad path toward the spot where the roses stood, and at every step the lady's silk dress rustled and crackled as though saying to all Nature round about, "Look, look, I am from Paris, I am from Paris!"

Meanwhile the gardener walked behind

them, hat in hand, pointing to the right and to the left, now at this rose-bush and now at that, and the lady stopped from time to time, and lifted to her eyes the glass which hung around her neck by a gold chain; and, as the gardener most eagerly praised his roses, she pouted a little and said, "That all amounts to nothing." The gardener then appeared quite miserable, and the little white dog barked as if saying, "Fool, fool," while the banker nodded his head to the gardener and said, "My wife likes only the very best."

Meanwhile they had come up to the two roses, who looked toward them with wide-opened eyes, and so attracted the lady that she stopped of her own accord, lifted her glasses to her eyes, and regarded them very closely. But the roses, when they perceived her glances, bowed their heads in shy bashfulness, and a quiver of shame flew over their bodies and made their bosoms swell. And, as they stood there with their heads humbly lowered, they were more beautiful than ever before; so beautiful that even the lady could not remain indifferent to their charms, and signified her pleasure by saying, "Possibly that might be something for me."

Her husband, perceiving that he too might be allowed to say something, added quickly, "Indeed, yes, two magnificent specimens: what will they cost?"

Whereupon the gardener named a sum so large that the lady was quite astonished

and put her hands to her ears, while her husband said, "Indeed, that is a very high price." "Besides, I only speak of the yellow one," continued the lady, "for the white one I have no use, but the yellow might be something for my tea-roses." "Indeed," added the husband, "that was also my idea; it would be an addition to your collection of tea-roses." And, turning to the gardener, he explained that his wife had the finest collection of tea-roses in the entire city.

Thus the bargain was made; and, having arranged that the next day their own gardener should come and get the yellow rose-bush, the gentleman, with the lady and the little white dog, entered their magnificent carriage and drove away.

When the roses were alone again they grew very sad; for they knew that the hour had struck when they were to part, probably for their whole lives; and they laid their cheeks together and wept, one into the heart of the other. And the white rose said to her sister, in a low whisper, "Oh, you blessed one! Oh, you blessed one! Shall I too meet with such a splendid lot as thine?"

And quite deep in the bottom of her tender heart there arose a bitter drop of envy; for the fate of her sister appeared most enticing, and she had to confess to herself that she had been found less beautiful than the yellow rose.

Thus stood the roses so entirely absorbed with each other that they did not notice

that other visitors had arrived and were looking at them. It was only when they heard childish voices crying, "Oh, father, father, the white one; she is so beautiful!" that they looked up and saw standing before them a man who held by one hand a little boy, and by the other a little girl.

They were the children who had been speaking, and they all looked at the white rose with admiring eyes. But the latter did not rejoice in the least, for the man looked quite different from the rich gentleman; he wore a threadbare coat and a well-worn hat, and the two children were most poorly dressed. Therefore it did not flatter her in the least that she should meet the approval of these poor people after being rejected by the rich. So quite spitefully she turned aside her little head as if to say, "Go along, I am not for you."

Such seemed also to be the thoughts of the gardener, who looked quite astonished when he returned from the garden gate and saw the three standing before his finest flowers. But the white rose could scarcely trust her ears when she heard the man inquire the price of the bush. True, he did so quite bashfully, but still he actually did so, and that appeared to the rose like an unheard-of boldness. However she triumphed in her heart when she heard the tremendous price which the gardener named and saw the sad expression of the man. But the children drew nearer to their

father, and the little boy cried quite beseechingly, "Oh, dear father, please *do* buy the beautiful rose;" and the girl added, "Only think, dear father, how delighted mamma will be when you bring the rose home to her." Then it happened for the first time that something quite bad stirred the heart of the white rose, for she became bitterly angry with the two children and would most gladly have stung them with her thorns.

Now the poor shoemaker, for that was the man's business, looked silently at the children and drew figures in the sand with his stick, as if calculating something. At last turning to the gardener he said, as if to excuse his boldness, "My wife has been very ill, and is only now getting a little better. I should have liked to give her a surprise; and since she loves roses so very much, especially white ones, I thought——"

"But I can not make any reduction," interrupted the gardener, and the white rose said to herself, "That's right, that's right."

Both the children looked up to their father silently and anxiously, and the father thought it over, and drew out his pocket-book, and counted, and counted, while the white rose trembled from her roots to her head in mute, bitter anguish. Suddenly she felt as if the hail was beating down upon her, and she was fainting away, when she heard the shoemaker say, "Well,

it is indeed very much money—but let it be—I will take the rose-bush.”

Thereupon she put her arm around her sister’s neck, and wept and resisted; but her anger and despair only made her the more beautiful, and the children clapped their hands in glee, and her resistance was vain.

The gardener received his money, and then dug the bush out of the soil; and, shuddering and trembling, the white rose was given into the hands of the shoemaker, who carried her away forever from her beautiful sister, who was so happy, oh, so much happier than she.

The following day the yellow rose was taken, as had been agreed upon, by the banker’s gardener; and she looked as proud and happy as a princess who is taken in marriage by a young king.

And she had indeed every cause to be cheerful, for her new home was very beautiful. The banker’s house was situated in the suburbs of the town where only rich people lived and in the street where resided only the richest of the rich. The street was indeed so exclusive that even the horses stepped softly in passing through, so as not to disturb the repose of the inhabitants. And in the houses were piled such treasures that the air was filled with gold dust; and the sparrows, when they flew through the street, issued from it with gilded tails.

Before the house, towards the street, there

was a small garden with yellowish walks, visible through an artistically wrought iron grating. The large garden was situated behind the house, surrounded by a high brick wall so that nobody could obtain a view of it.

This was the new home of the yellow rose; and, upon entering the garden, she at once perceived that she had been introduced into most aristocratic society. In the garden were many flower-beds; but the one in the midst, a large circular bed, was the most select in the whole garden, and there stood a group of rose bushes: only yellow, yellowish, greenish yellow, and reddish yellow roses. That was the collection of tea-roses of which the rich gentleman had spoken yesterday. And to this spot turned the gardener who carried the yellow rose.

Then it came to pass, for the first time, that something quite wicked stirred the heart of the yellow rose; for, when she perceived that all the flowers put their heads together, and looked at her, and nudged each other and called attention to the new inhabitant of the bed, an immense vanity arose in her and casting proud glances about her, she thought, "What are you all compared to me?" But her pride subsided a little, and she even became quite embarrassed when she had reached the centre of the bed and received her place there; for, as with curious glances the other roses

looked, she felt as if their glances were searching the depths of her heart, and the whispering and humming of the many voices almost stunned her.

Of course she was the subject of all these observations, and from time to time she caught a word of the conversation.

"Another new one, did you find that we had too much space here?"

"On the contrary, it is becoming very crowded." "I should like to know what our gracious lady is thinking of." "Probably *we* are no longer pretty enough for her." "Have you already seen the new one?" "Yes, yes—passable, passable."

The yellow rose, who had held her eyes cast down, now made a low courtesy, and lifted her blushing face. In her neighborhood she perceived a few elderly rose matrons, who nodded to her kindly and compassionately, as old court ladies nod to a poor young debutante, who for the first time puts her little foot upon the smooth parquet of the court.

But beautiful the rose matrons were, that she must confess, and beautiful in general were all the roses. So one thing became clear to her at once, that she was no longer the only one of her kind, but one among many equals.

What was very noticeable and gave the roses an especially stately air were the small, neatly wrought tablets which every one wore around her neck, and upon which was

written the name, pedigree and birthplace of each rose. What remarkable things could be read there! Some of the roses were from China, others from Japan, some from the East Indies, and one even from the island of Bourbon. The company here was indeed most select.

Now the gardener approached with the tablet destined for the new rose; and, while he put it around her neck, the whispering and rustling stopped, for all the roses stretched their necks in breathless suspense in order to learn who and what the new-comer might be. Scarcely had the gardener stepped back when the noise began anew, much louder than before, and very ugly and scornful. For, while it was written on the tablet that she came from good aristocratic stock—as otherwise she never would have been admitted there—still the birthplace, the birthplace!! “Born in this town,” was written on the tablet; and one can easily imagine what an air the roses from China, Japan, the East Indies, and the island of Bourbon gave to themselves. And like lightning it flew from one to another: “Just think of it, she was born here, simply a native of this town.”

Thereupon one of the proud matronly roses bent towards her full of pity and said, “You poor child, what a cheerless, unhappy childhood you must have had quite without society.” “Oh, no indeed,” replied the yel-

low rose quickly, "I had a friend—a white rose with whom I have grown up."

At which remark the rose matron drew her mouth aside and said quite horrified, "But, my dear child, a white rose? Pray do not say that aloud, or you will compromise yourself." And another rose who feigned not to have heard correctly said aloud, "You have had a friendship with a white rose, with a white rose indeed." By this time the poor yellow rose began to feel quite humiliated, for she heard them all chuckling and repeating the words, and still was unable to understand what was amiss.

But her first questioner turned again to her and said, "My dear child, a white rose was indeed no fit company for you. She must have been something quite ordinary." Then the yellow rose, quite overcome with shame because she understood so little about the aristocratic world, and had so entirely misjudged her own value, answered quite bashfully, "Well, if I said we were friends I may have said a little too much." "I thought so indeed," answered her new acquaintance, "that person has doubtless thrust herself upon you, and you were too kind to rebuke her." And, as the yellow rose saw the eyes of all fixed upon her interrogatingly, her courage left her and she replied quite slowly, "Well, yes, that may have been the case."

However, scarcely had she said this when the wicked words fell bitterly upon her

heart, and she thought of her poor white rose who had fared so badly ; and, bending her head in silence so that she saw and heard nothing of all that was happening around her, she wept silently into her trembling bosom.

Meanwhile the shoemaker continued on his way home with the white rose, whose violent grief gradually turned into dull helpless despair.

Resistance was useless ; this she had already illustrated ; therefore she submitted to her sad fate and hung her beautiful head in deep sadness.

The way was very long and the shoemaker had not enough money to pay for a cab, so was obliged to walk ; the father going ahead and the two children following hand in hand.

As they came into the city where the streets became more and more hot and sultry, they saw that the rose hung down her head. The little boy said, " Oh, look at the poor rose, how tired she looks. She must be too hot ; " and his sister replied, " Certainly she must be thirsty, and as soon as we are at home we must give her a drink. "

Then the children put their little hands under the head of the rose that it might not droop too low, and said, " Oh, you poor beautiful dear rose, only wait until we get home. "

The rose allowed this, but closed her eyes and would not even thank the children, for

she was very angry with them as she considered them the cause of all her misfortune.

At last, when it was quite dark, they arrived at the house of the poor shoemaker. The white rose opened her eyes and looked up. The street was very pleasant, and the house which they entered had quite a stately appearance; but, when they had reached the vestibule and the door was closed behind them, the children opened a side door and commenced to descend; whereupon the poor rose knew that henceforth she was to live in a basement, for the shoemaker was the janitor of the stately house.

A home in a cellar! This then was the fulfilment of her dreams about the future! Once more despair arose in her heart, and she only had one wish more, and that was that she might die very, very soon.

But the children had already rushed down the stairs, and their voices could be heard below saying, "mother, dear mother, only see what we are bringing for you." On the sofa sat a pale weak woman, and, while the children crowded around her, and embraced her, the poor shoemaker lifted the rose in both hands and showed it to her without speaking.

Two tears appeared in the woman's wide-opened eyes, and folding her hands she looked first at the rose, and then at her husband, so that it was impossible to say whether it was joy over the magnificent flower or that she silently thanked God for

having given her so kind a husband. At last she said, "Oh, how splendid, she is altogether too beautiful for us! Now, children, you must take care that she finds a good home with us."

This was enough for the children; they ran away, and soon returned with a large flower-pot filled with fine soft black garden earth, and into this was planted the white rose. Then they placed the flower-pot upon the table, and, fetching a little water-sprinkler, gave her a good drink of water. And, standing there upon the table with her head hanging down in deep dejection, she looked like a princess who had been taken from her palace and brought into exile in distant lands.

Then the children had their supper, each a piece of bread with a little butter, which seemed quite to content them; for, as they sat at the supper-table, they could constantly view their new treasure and nod to her gaily. Soon afterwards they all went to bed; the light was extinguished, and it was dark, silent night. Everybody slept except the poor white rose. In the midst of her conflicting thoughts sleep was impossible.

But suddenly it became light; and lo! it was the moon who was looking in at the window. She sent a bright silvery ray down into the room to her dear white rose with whom she had spoken many a time most lovingly; and the rose rejoiced, for she realized that still she was not quite for-

gotten, and bathed herself in the soft white light.

Was it the charming light of the moon which influenced her dreams? for it seemed as if two angels were stepping into the room—two tiny, charming lovely angels, who glided across the floor with their long, blonde hair shining in the moonlight. They pushed two chairs to the table; and, climbing upon them, they reached forward, and, putting their little faces quite close to the rose, they kissed her quite softly upon her petals, and her sweet tender calyx. And the rose, quite at a loss to explain the sweet dream, trembled with joy, and silently drank in the breath of the young lips.

Then the little angels jumped down, pushed back the chairs, and disappeared—but whither? There, where the children had disappeared when they had been sent to bed. And with a start the rose thought, “Could it be possible that the two whose appearance had been so lovely to her that she had taken them for angels: could they indeed have been the two children?”

The thought spoiled all her joy, for she was determined to remain very angry with the children; still, she could not help thinking how sweet it was when the dear young lips had kissed her. When it was again day, and the family came into the room, she looked up at the children, and observed them closely for the first time.

She now saw that they were really two

charming children, with blonde curls, large blue eyes and lovely smiling faces. There was no doubt of it—it was they who had risen from their beds during the night in order to kiss and caress their beautiful rose.

After breakfast the father said, “This is such a fine day we must put our rose into the garden.” So the children took the flower-pot upstairs into the small garden in front of the house, and put her into the beautiful warm morning sun. From her place in the garden she was able to look into the street and see the people passing to and fro, and the carriages rolling by; and, as it was all so new and interesting to her, she felt very comfortable in her new situation.

Directly behind her, on the ground floor, was the window of the shoemaker’s lodging; and, at the wide opened window he sat, busily working at his boot and shoes. The rose contemplated him silently; and, looking beyond him into the room, which was now brightened by the rays of the morning sun, it did not look nearly as dark and gloomy as on the evening before, but, on the contrary, quite tidy and attractive.

At this moment, the children with books and slates came out of the house on their way to school; and, as they passed the fence, they put their faces close to it and nodding to the rose, said, “Good-bye, dear rose,” and it was so sweet to hear that even the rose must admire it.

While thinking over these many things she heard an unknown voice which said, "Good-morning, Mrs. Rose"; and, turning around, she saw a little canary bird hanging in a cage at the open window. He had bright little black eyes, and a small yellow beak with which he said again, "Good-morning, Mrs. Rose; I had no opportunity of speaking to you yesterday; allow me to introduce myself—my name is Piping." The courteous manner of the canary pleased the rose, and, making to him a friendly bow, she began a conversation with him by asking how long he had been at the shoemaker's. Whereupon Mr. Piping sighed, and answered that he was no more a child, for he was already one year and two days old; day before yesterday his birthday had been celebrated, but with the shoemaker he had only been three months, and hoped he might stay with him the remainder of his life.

When the rose asked for further particulars as to why he liked this family so much, he turned his little black eyes in his head and said they were angelic people, especially the children; and then he became so deeply moved that he had quickly to take a drink of water.

As the sun rose higher, the flower began to feel very hot; but just then the children came home from school, and, taking the flower-pot, they carried it down into the cool shady room; and this they did from

day to day, always eager to think of something kind and good for their beloved rose.

Amidst all this care and attention the heart of the rose suddenly stirred and began to bud, and a sweet mysterious life seemed to throb through her entire body. But when the bud was about to open—and the eyes of the entire family were looking for the desired moment—there sprung up in her heart once again the old wicked angry grudge. She did not wish to grant them so much joy, and therefore she refused all nourishment and resisted the power of nature with all her might; and lo! the bud withered, the blossom did not come out, and the hope of the family was not fulfilled.

They became very sad; and the owner of the house, who was passing at that moment and noticed their grief, said, "Of course the beautiful white rose could not thrive and blossom down in your basement. You had better sell her to me and let me plant her in my garden. I will give you much more than you paid for her." But the shoemaker answered, "Oh! no, sir—indeed all you say is true, but we love her very much, and when we look at her we feel almost as if we had a garden of our own. So do not take it amiss if we will not part with her. I'll keep her a short time longer and perhaps she will bud once again; and if not, why then I'll sell her to you." Whereupon the landlord went away, feeling very angry.

The rose, hearing this conversation, felt

a ray of happiness entering into her soul, for now there was a hope that she might escape from the hated life in the basement. She need only to *will* it, and she could have a beautiful life in the garden of the rich man. So she resolved to act accordingly.

That night, when everybody slept once again, the two children crept slyly into the room barefooted, and just as they had jumped out of their beds, looking like two little angels. But this time they did not laugh and chuckle; and, as the moon lighted up their faces, they appeared very pale and sad.

Again they pushed two chairs to the table, and, climbing upon them, they reached forward and kissed the rose. But, as they did so, they cried, and their tears fell down into the heart of the rose.

"Now we have nothing left," they whispered. "Now we have neither rose nor garden any more; now we have nothing." And with that they went back to their beds.

When they had gone the rose closed her eyes and tried to sleep; but it was impossible. Something burned and glowed in her heart; it was the tears of the children which had fallen there. Early the following morning there came a knock at the window, and who should fly in but her old friend, Mr. Morning Wind. The rose had not seen him since she had left the garden, therefore she was much pleased at his visit. He went up and down the room in

great haste, blowing the dust from the table and the rest of the furniture, and one could see that he was indeed greatly excited. "I have just come from your sister, the yellow rose," at length he said. The white rose at once became very anxious to learn how she was; but the Morning Wind, who generally was a very gay young fellow, grew quite serious and said, "Oh, it is a sad story. It fares but badly with her. The tea roses, among whom she stands quite lonely, are very angry and cross with her, and all her grandeur will soon come to an end." "How do you know that?" asked the rose. "Oh, do you know what whims are?" asked the Morning Wind. "No," answered the rose. "Well," continued the Morning Wind, "they are small black beetles which are very expensive, and are therefore kept mostly by rich people. They play with them in order to kill time. They let them fly about the room, and then catch them and place them upon their heads." "How strange?" said the rose. "Indeed—but what of that? It is the fashion," remarked the Morning Wind. "The banker's wife, in order to show that she is the richest lady in the town, keeps, as you may think, quite a number of these bugs; and every day she needs at least one, but sometimes two or three, and she puts them on her head and lets them sit there until they scratch and bite her with their sharp claws and teeth, and then she cries until her husband comes

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and takes them away and throws them out of the window. And with this play they pass their time every day."

"Now you must know further that when these bugs sit on their heads, people have very curious thoughts and imaginations; and thus it has suddenly occurred to the banker's wife that she had become tired of her beautiful collection of tea roses, and she wishes to plant camellias in their places. So, when autumn comes, that will be done, and the poor roses will be torn from the ground."

"What then will be done with them?" anxiously interrupted the white rose. "They will be thrown away," answered the Morning Wind, "and your poor sister, the yellow rose, with them. Do you now understand why I am so sad? Yes, yes," he continued, as he saw that the white rose stood very silent, "you have found a much better place where you are attended to and well cared for. Here there are no black bugs of which you need be afraid;" and therewith he sighed again, took up his coat-tails, and flew away through the window.

The white rose was still quite speechless; and, long after the Morning Wind had flown away, she pondered over his words, "You have found a better place," and suddenly her heart began to throb and burn, and, looking in, she saw that a deep feeling of shame had taken possession of her. Yes, the rose was ashamed; and, as she gazed into her heart, the shame looked up to her

and said, "You ungrateful thing;" and, when the shoemaker's family came in, and she saw the sad faces of the children, she read again in their eyes the word ungrateful. From that moment the rose felt a sensation as though thus far she had been sleeping and suddenly had awakened; and that day, when the children carried her out into the front garden, she drank deeply of the cool pure water, which they gave her, and ate of the fine black garden earth, so that Mr. Piping sang out to her, "Good appetite, Mrs. Rose, good appetite."

Thereupon the rose felt her sap rise and throb within like liquid fire; and scarcely had two days passed before she began again to sprout, and one bud came out quite bashfully. When the children, who had watched her constantly, saw this, they ran breathlessly to their parents and called for them to come out and see it. Meanwhile the rose smiled within in silent joy, and lo! a second bud broke forth, and then a third, as if the rose would never tire with the pleasure of giving. And, as one morning the poor shoemaker, with his pale wife, and pretty children, stepped over the threshold, they all stopped short as if charmed by a wonderful sight; for, on the table, they saw the beautiful rose, bending with motherly joy over two small snow-white rosebuds which had blossomed out during the night.

And the rose bent and nodded, and from her whispering lips issued a sweet fragrance,

which changed the dwelling of the poor people to a paradise ; and, if they had understood the language of the flowers, they would have heard the rose say, "It is in return for your love, in gratitude for your kindness."

Through the whole house sounded the jubilant cries of the two children. Every one who lived in the house came to see the flower ; and, as that day the family of roses was taken into the front garden, all the passers-by stopped in the street to look at her ; and the white rose celebrated the great triumph of superior beauty.

Everybody rejoiced except the landlord—the thought that the poor shoemaker had dared to refuse his offer for the rosebush so enraged him that he longed for revenge. He daily grew more and more disagreeable and exacting ; and, when autumn drew near, the entire family sat around with careworn faces, and tearful eyes, for the landlord had discharged the father and they were homeless.

Then a deep cutting reproach went through the soul of the rose, for she felt that she alone was to blame for all this misfortune. That night she again had a dream, but not a lovely, fantastic one as at other times, but a dark horrible apparition which came in with sulking step and walked towards the spot where the children lay in their little beds. Never had the rose seen anything so dreadful ; never had she heard anything more horrible than the hoarse whisper

which came from its ugly toothless mouth; and, as the rose saw it step up to the beds, she was speechless with fear.

A strange pale yellow light spread about this form; and, by the glimmer of this light, the rose saw the horrible form bend over the children and stretch out its withered hands over their heads; and, as it did so, the sweet rosy little faces became distorted in bitter anguish, and looked quite thin and hollow.

At this an inexpressible anxiety came over her; and, lifting her head to Heaven, she whispered, "Save them! Save my poor innocent little darlings;" and from her trembling lips the perfume floated through the room like clouds, and wafted as far as to the sleeping children. Then the horrible form came out and said to the rose, "Do not smell so sweet, you have no longer any power here. Here I am ruler, and my name is Hunger, Hunger, Hunger!" But the rose cried once again more fervently to Heaven and said, "Let me repay to these poor people all the love which they have shown to me. Let me repay it to them in what they consider their best and most beloved—their children."

More powerful, more intoxicating still, grew her beautiful fragrance; more and more enraged the glances which were cast upon her by the dreadful monster Hunger, but to no purpose. He could not overpower her perfume—he could not return to the

children's bed, for the sweet fragrance of the rose hung like a veil between him and them; and, suddenly turning, he fled, overpowered by its intensity.

A few days later the shoemaker returned home with a joyful countenance. His daily search for a position had ended favorably, and he had obtained a situation in the house of the richest banker in the town. The white rose listened most attentively as he told the good news: "the richest banker in the town," sounded most familiar to her, and yet she could not tell why. Still, within her heart she felt a presentiment, as if the sacrifice of her sweet perfume had not been in vain, and her wish was about to be fulfilled.

It was a most magnificent house into which the shoemaker's family now moved, and its owner was very, very wealthy.

"Just imagine," said the father one day, as he came into the room to join his family, "how rich our employers are. The lady of the house has had torn up and thrown away all her beautiful rose-bushes which cost many thousands of dollars, in order that she may plant camellias in their place; and see, the gardener has given me one of the beautiful roses, as he says it is too sick ever to amount to much." Whereupon he drew forth from the paper in his hand, a yellow rose. The white rose felt as though struck by lightning; for, behold! it was the friend of her youth, her sister, the beautiful yellow rose.

The recognition was indeed mutual; but the yellow rose could only give a languid sad smile, for she had grown very weak and sick from the cruel treatment which she had received.

When the children had put her into a flower-pot, and placed her by the side of the white rose, she saw her sister in all the assurance of love and happiness, and once more she put forth her tired arms around her sister, and their faces rested cheek to cheek.

Then said the yellow rose, "Formerly you called me happy and envied my fate; that was when we started out on our careers; to-day I call you happy and envy you—and this is at the end of life, therefore my opinion has more weight than thine. And, since I must soon leave you and depart from the earth which promised me so much and fulfilled so little, I beg of you to hear my advice, and take all that happiness which comes to you, for you have desired it." Having thus spoken the yellow rose drooped her beautiful head; and, when the children came in the next day, they said sadly, "Alas! the yellow rose is dead."

And the little girl clasping her brother's hand said in a low whisper, "Oh, only see how deeply our rose grieves about it; she has been weeping;" which was indeed true, for the tears glistened in her calyx.

But then something very strange happened. The boy's eyes grew large and full of light as never before; he looked silently

and intently at the white rose as if seeing her for the first time; and, taking his slate, without speaking or relinquishing his gaze, he began to draw. The little sister watched him closely and followed his every movement, both of them in their interest forgetting breakfast and everything.

At length, when school time came, he put his slate into his bag so that no one could see what he had drawn or know what a deep, treasured secret he carried with him.

Two days afterwards, as the father sat with his wife, he said slowly, "Mary, Anthony's teacher spoke to me to-day, and said we ought to watch our son very carefully; for the other day he saw one of his drawings, a rose, which was most beautiful, and he believed our Anthony may one day become a great and famous painter. What do you think of that?" But the wife said nothing: only her eyes became larger and larger, as though gazing into futurity.

The shoemaker had spoken in a very low voice, so that no one could hear him when telling this deep, sacred secret which seemed almost too good to be true. But somebody had heard him; it was the white rose; and a feeling went through her heart that at last her prayers had been answered, and the sacrifice of her sweet perfume had been accepted.

But you would like to know what became of little Anthony? Well I may tell you that another time.

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